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LETTER DATED 18 DECEMBER 1996 FROM THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF IRAQ TO THE UNITED NATIONS ADDRESSED TO THE SECRETARY-GENERAL

On instructions from my Government, I have the honour to notify you of continued violations of the ceasefire resolution and the Tehran agreement concerning the area of separation between Iraq and Iran that were committed by the Iranian side between 25 September and 21 November 1996, as shown in the list annexed hereto.

I should be grateful if you would have this letter and its annex circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(Signed) Nizar HAMDOON
Permanent Representative

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Annex

Iranian violations of the ceasefire and the 1991 Tehran agreement between 25 September and 21 November 1996

1. 25 September 1996

The Philippine tug Queen Bird and its crew were attacked in the Shahiniyah area south of Umm al Kasar inland by five persons armed with Kalashnikov assault rifles and dressed as Arabs. Coming from the direction of the Iranian shore in a fishing boat, they seized the crew and stole their personal possessions. Two of the crew members were wounded in the incident.

2. 28 September 1996

At 1800 hours an Iranian patrol consisting of some 12 men with light weapons approached to within 600 metres of the Mundhiriyah post opposite Zadi Najaf. It produced a map, and the area was reconnoitred.

3. 28 September 1996

At 2230 hours a group of three Iranians approached the Mundhiriyah post to a point 400 metres inside Iraqi territory. They fled when the soldiers manning the post were obliged to fire in their direction.

4. 28 September 1996

The Iranian Khumrawi complex and the frontier barrier point failed to turn on their lights until 2100 hours. In the morning, an Iranian vehicle had been seen coming from the Iranian side inside Iraqi territory.

5. 29 September 1996

At 1500 hours a number of boats belonging to Iraqis, including two belonging to the Khuljan fishing and fish-marketing company, Khuljan I (No. 214) and Khuljan II (No. 213), were fishing in our territorial waters near Khawr al-Amayah harbour when they were seized by an Iranian patrol and escorted to the harbour at Bandar Khomeini in the northern part of the Arabian Gulf. There, the crew members were blindfolded and taken to prison. On 30 September they were brought before the competent court and asked a number of questions, including questions on where they had been fishing and who owned the boats. They were then returned to the harbour and told to go home, all the boats having been released except for Khuljan I and Khuljan II. When the two masters refused to return to Iraq without their boats, they were forcibly returned to Faw on an Iraqi boat, the Najaf, owned by Tawfiq Taha.

6. 30 September 1996

The Iranian authorities detained the following Iraqi boat owners while they were fishing in Iraqi territorial waters: Muhammad Khalifah Hasan, Hamid Ya'qub Yusuf, Tawfiq Taha Halub and Tariq Harun Yusuf.

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7. 25 October 1996

At 1200 hours an Iranian patrol boat intercepted five Iraqi fishing boats while they were operating south of Mina' al-Amiq in Iraqi territorial waters. There were three civilians on the Iranian boat, one of them carrying a GC weapon, and the boat had a machine-gun mounted in the bows. The Iraqi boats were escorted to Bandar Khomeini. At 1700 hours on 30 October, all the boats were released together with their 50 crew members.

8. 29 October 1996

At 1930 hours a grey fibreglass Iranian patrol boat with a 48-horsepower Yamaha engine carrying three civilians approached the Iraqi side in the Sayhan area at coordinates 330565. The Iranian boat fired at the Iraqi patrols using a GC weapon.

9. 30 October 1996

At 1645 hours the Iranian side, using a small boat with 12 civilians on board, proceeded to film and photograph the Iranian vessel Ardashir, submerged in the Sayhan area at coordinates 308580, with a video camera and a still camera.

10. 10 November 1996

At 1300 hours, while they were fishing near Mina' al-Amiq, the Iraqi boats Al-Baqir 194, Al-Miqdam and Al-Qasim were approached by an Iranian patrol boat with a machine-gun mounted in the bows. There were six persons on board, one of whom spoke Arabic. They escorted the Iraqi boats and their crews of 31 fishermen to Bandar Khomeini where they were detained. They were thence brought before a court on charges of illegal fishing and were each made to give an undertaking not to fish in Iranian waters. On 19 and 22 November the boats were released together with their crews.

11. 17 November 1996

An Iranian patrol boat with seven Persian-speaking civilians on board and a machine-gun mounted in the bows seized an Iraqi boat with six persons on board while it was fishing in the vicinity of Mina' al-Bakr and Mina' al-Amiq and escorted them to the Iranian side. On 21 November 1996 the boat and its crew were released.

12. 21 November 1996

While a salvage team belonging to the Iraqi Ports Authority was at the entry to the Shatt al Arab channel examining the submerged crane Antarah with a view to refloating it, the team was subjected to armed intimidation by an Iranian patrol which demanded that it should leave the location and refused to allow it to work.